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Indiana Celebrates National Community Development Week April 21-27, 2003

INDIANAPOLIS — Today, Lt. Governor Joe Kernan officially kicked off Indiana's celebration of National Community Development Week.

Taking place April 21-27, the week marks the 29th anniversary of the federally funded Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. The week is designed to encourage those who benefit from the program to communicate with their elected representatives about its importance to their communities.

CDBG funds are used in a variety of state community development initiatives including the Community Focus Fund (CFF) program, which is administered through the Indiana Department of Commerce's Community Assistance Office. Since 1997 Commerce has awarded 422 CFF grants totaling \$167.7 million, leveraging an additional \$167.5 million in local support.

"These federal funds have played an enormous role in helping communities across Indiana grow and prosper," said Kernan, who serves as director of the Department of Commerce. "From a library expansion and renovation project in Akron, to the purchase of a fire truck in Jennings County, to downtown revitalization funding in South Whitley — and projects in many communities in between — the program works to improve the lives of Indiana residents, and we are pleased to voice our strong and enduring support."

Enacted into law in 1974, CDBG is the principal federal program providing grants to states, cities and towns to devise neighborhood approaches that will improve the physical, economic and social conditions of communities. It is administered nationally by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Projects eligible for CFF grants include infrastructure improvements, childcare facilities, senior and community centers, downtown revitalization and fire stations and fire trucks. Up to \$500,000 is available per applicant; a match of at least 10 percent is required from recipients of the grants. For more information about the CFF grant program, contact the Community Development Division of the Indiana Department of Commerce toll-free at 800.824.2476 or access its Web site at www.indianacommerce.com.

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